THE FRONTIER

A CHRISTIAN COMMENTARY ON THE COMMON LIFE

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FEBRUARY 1952
Vol. III No. 2

THE LAYMAN
IN THE CHURCH

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GERMANY HAS TO CHOOSE

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FRONTIER
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Vol. III. No. 2. FEBRUARY 1952

Monthly Letter

THERE were several reactions to the articles on European relations in our December issue, and our editorial Board recommended that we pursue the theme inviting some contributions from readers on the Continent. Almost the next day we heard from a reader (who has also been a contributor) now working in Berlin. He is an American, who has for the last year been closely associated with German Christians, and he firmly protests against the views expressed in *The Frontier*, saying that "a kind of objectivity permeates them which excludes a sympathetic understanding of the living people and their problems". For evidence of his meaning, he points to what Germans are saying about the rearmament of their country, the subject of "the hottest controversy in Germany to-day, especially in Christian circles". He sends us, as examples, two translations of German articles by representative German Christian writers; and we are taking the unusual course of printing one of these[1]—the one that diverges most widely from most British views—followed by our comments upon it.

[1] Originally a broadcast, later published in *Die Stimme der Gemeinde*, an organ representative of *Bekennende Kirche* opinion.

Germany's Choice

We do this in an effort to give—as our correspondent asks—" serious consideration, in Christian brotherhood, to this whole *Bekennende Kirche* line of thinking, and an answer from the heart of a British Christian ". For he says that Germans would not see the point of what our contributor " Libra ", e.g., said about " Germany's choice ". Most Germans feel they are powerless ; and that so far as they can choose they have chosen—namely, that they want a reunited Germany, non-communist and if possible neutral. But they do not think the issue lies fundamentally in German hands. To quote our correspondent :

> " It is precisely the Christians who have been through the Kirchenkampf who would be the first to disagree with your editorial analysis of the only way of dealing with the German problem. To them the greatest spiritual temptations with which Germans are today confronted are those toward restoration of the old nationalism, rebuilding of the old militarism, and a crusade for the " Christian West " against atheistic Communism, in short, the danger of self-righteousness in place of the righteousness of God and the forgiveness of sins. They would disagree with the aim you state. To them the only possible aim for a Christian is the maintenance of peace in politics. They would like to relativize the whole conflict between east and west in the minds of Christians, and absolutize the call to live in the freedom of the Gospel, which does not depend on worldly powers, free from fear of any earthly fate, and from self-righteousness (such as lurks behind all attempts at political strategic thinking) and longing for a comfortable " Christian culture ". The call to witness to the Gospel and to God's righteousness in both East and West is their main concern. One cannot despise this point of view because the East Zone is full of men who live in it at daily danger to themselves."

We had in fact said nothing about rearmament (our articles were about European cultural, political and economic collaboration). We did not think, still less wish, to get involved in the German armament controversy, especially at a disadvantage which would make it appear that we were arguing for militaristic measures and our German

friends against them. We fully recognize that some of them at least may be bearing Christian responsibilities heavier than those at present laid upon us.

The Nature of Responsibility

To justify our own position and our view of theirs, we cannot do better than call attention to the recent definition of Responsibility given by Sir Walter Moberly in his Riddell Lectures.[2] These are primarily concerned with responsibility in and for crime, guilt and punishment, but the principles enunciated apply equally to armaments and defence, since the origins of war, like those of crime, are rooted deeply in supposedly respectable society. Briefly, Sir Walter Moberly's thesis is that there are three distinct levels of insight and action in dealing with delinquency. One is the practical protection of a social order against what threatens its existence. From this standpoint, armament is a necessity of society in much the same sense as fire-fighting equipment, and measures are devised against enemy forces in total disregard of the fact that they are human beings; they are considered simply as perils to be ruthlessly eliminated. Above this level is that of justice. Here military action and punishment of criminals are regulated by sincere efforts to avoid unnecessary suffering or evil and to attain standards of equity, giving what is due to each, not only to the enemy soldier or nation but also to the criminal in revolt against all society. But this leads us up to the highest level, and there we meet with an insight into human realities which reveals both social and individual fraud or violence as symptoms of a much wider web of moral causality. Crime and war become merged in the profounder problem of sin. It is here, where the highest aspiration to good discloses the full depth of evil, that man knows he " ought " to accept the consequences of far more

[2] Responsibility: By Sir Walter Moberly. *The Riddell Memorial Lectures*; 21st series. Oxford University Press, 1951. Price 5s.

evil than he knows himself to have done, and can only attempt such acceptance by Divine grace. (The hero of Eliot's play *Family Reunion* is quoted as an instance of this.)

The *Bekennende Kirche* line of thought, if our correspondent's account of it be correct, affirms this third view of crime and war, but rejects the other two. They are not, however, mutually exclusive; in actual life they are interlocked. Neither the crude utilitarian element, nor that of justice as-far-as-we-can-see, can in fact be repudiated by any actual community or nation. We are not sure that the account, or our understanding of it, really is quite correct. But it does seem to us in Britain that many German Christians are too ready to plead powerlessness as a way out of taking what is admittedly a very terrible responsibility. To suggest that *Germany*—or any *nation* in such a position—could be neutral is outside all realism. And to " relativize the conflict between east and west " means, unless we misinterpret the phrase, trying to contract out of the whole situation into a sort of spiritual Thebaid. In saying this we are, we confess, being as objective as we can, but this does not " exclude a sympathetic understanding ". There is a wide difference between not taking the human and living problems of Germans seriously and regarding them just as Germans do. To do the latter would not be giving them such help as we may be able to render. Help for them—and us, for we too have formidable political problems—lies precisely in being as objective as we can. We want to encourage them to realize that they, in fact—and it is a fact—are very far from powerless to influence their own destiny.

Mote and Beam

To show it is not nationalistic prejudice that makes us see this mote in the German eye, let us turn to a considerable splinter obstructing the vision of many in Britain. Mr. H. J. Huizinga has called it, we fear rightly, an " emotional resistance against the intellectual recognition " of England's

present position in the world ;[3] and he quotes a number of instances from recent British publicists. He overstates his case ; but the quotations might do many of us good by showing us how others see us—in this case a very perspicuous Dutch journalist. He writes as an enthusiast for European union, deploring, as we do too, the backwardness of Britain in that great design : but the point of his argument is that Britain is failing to adapt itself to present realities, hindered by a conflict between the head and the heart—the head well aware of the lessons of Egypt, Persia, Argentina, Palestine, etc., but a heart still dwelling in the memories of past greatness. Hence the symptomatic " outbursts of emotional rebellion against the facts of history " to which this writer calls attention. It can only do us good to examine ourselves in this respect. For an individual person there may be no stiffer test of character than having to adapt to the diminished rôle in life to which it may please God to call him, and much the same is true for a nation. The two things are also connected, for there is a psychological compensation in belonging to a collectivity that one feels to be powerful. For Britain the present time is a spiritual challenge to be met with more modesty, realism and regard for other nations than, we confess, some of our publicists have been showing.

To accept this remonstrance is not, however, to approve all Mr. Huizinga says in support of it. For instance, he compares the British Commonwealth as a " has-been " with the Liberal Party, belonging to the same period of history, outdated by the same forces and just as reluctant to leave the scene. He estimates it simply as a power body, now helplessly overshadowed by the new world empires, and in itself neither a disciplined group nor strategically disposed nor sufficiently populated. The whole of Australasia has fewer inhabitants than London, South Africa but a million whites with any loyalty to the old firm, Canada is

[3] In the *Fortnightly*, January 1952 : article on " England as an ex-world power ".

in all practical respects linked closer to the U.S.A. than to Britain, and no one can look on the South Asian Dominions and Colonies as very deeply committed members. The magnificent loyalties shown by most of these dependencies in the past are glories if we like, but have to be realistically re-assessed as actual power factors to-day—and so forth. All this is very largely true ; but who can say that the value of the Commonwealth is exhausted, either as an experiment in the association of independent States or as a training-ground for politically immature peoples ? Actually, no one knows for certain what its " power " value is ; we hope no others of our European friends will mislead themselves by calculating it exclusively in terms of war potential, like Stalin asking " How many divisions has the Pope ? " And, whilst we are having this frank exchange of views (which we think is one way of showing ourselves good Europeans) may we not ask our Dutch critic also to look into his conscience and make sure that his case against the reality of the Commonwealth has nothing to do with the sorrows of the Dutch Empire, which has admittedly had a raw deal from recent history ?

Some Large Issues

One of the reasons why Holland and some other smaller countries would like Britain firmly committed to a European federation is that they trust our relative impartiality as against either the French or the Germans. Also they have a kind of hope that we might make a Commonwealth out of Europe, where other possible leaders would only make an empire. In this they may overlook a cardinal difference between commonwealth and continental problems. It is much easier to build up from less independence to more, than it is to persuade people to forego some of the independence they have enjoyed. In the Commonwealth we have been doing the former ; in Europe we should be trying to do the latter. The whole genius of the British race

has gone into this tremendous experiment of the Commonwealth, and its leaders would make, in comparison, but a poor hand at the jockeying for position with Germany and France which would be inevitable before anything like the same pattern of association could be brought about on the Continent.

Nevertheless, for Britain it is not a case of "*either*" Europe "*or*" the Commonwealth. When all is said, Britain could give far more of a lead to Europe than she is giving, and many ways of association can be devised between us and the European peoples, if only they can learn to be more gradual and we to be more sympathetic. We may all have to realize that organizations for specific practical ends are better training-grounds for co-operation than ambitious gatherings aiming directly at political unity: and to get used to the idea of international groupings that are over-lapping and not exclusive—such as were sketched in Libra's article of December. What is to be deplored is the slackness and coldness we have hitherto shown in defining what we do think practicable and what measures we should ourselves be ready to join in. But this our leaders are beginning to do. Meanwhile, one thing needed in this country is a far more widespread appreciation of the issues at stake both in the Commonwealth and in Europe, and perhaps a good deal less pre-occupation with ourselves.

Inflation: the Moral Issue

A letter we publish in this number from Sir Richard Livingstone calls attention to the ethical dilemma implied in our January Letter on Inflation. He sees—as we intended our readers should—that the weakness of democratic leadership we were describing holds a double danger—moral discredit on the one hand and physical disaster on the other. He seems to take us to task for not resolving this problem, which we were at the time concerned only to define. Moral weakness of this kind is not entirely restricted to people working in systems professedly demo-

cratic, though they are the most liable to it. For the individual in a political position, there is usually a constitutional aspect of the matter—whether he is in reality a " representative " or only a " delegate ". There are also some crises, where a politician may honestly believe that it is a lesser evil to yield to misguided pressure from below than to let another take over his office (" If I do the communist will get in "). But in how much of our democratic system is this distinction between delegate and representative clearly understood? This is a subject worth ventilation; for a democratic system will work only if it is conducted in an aristocratic spirit: this is a fact which in the past the British people often showed themselves most intuitively able to understand, but are now in danger of forgetting.

A Meditation

The article " Man no Animal " which appears here on a later page calls for a word of introduction. It is one of a series of meditations recorded by its author, of a type not unlike those practised in some schools of philosophy and religion, except that it is, in form, addressed to a reader. We are not recommending this as a method, for as such it may not be of value or interest to many people. We publish it for its intrinsic interest as an eloquent expression of the way in which the experience of *wonder*, which several of the world's supreme thinkers, including Aristotle, describe as the mainspring of philosophy, leads on towards the spirit of worship. The article is the product of an original and thoroughly modern mind and we shall be interested to learn, from any comments our readers have to make upon it, whether they think there is a place for this kind of mental exercise in *The Frontier*.

INTERIM

Archbishop Brilioth

Archbishop Brilioth, who is to speak at the Frontier Luncheon on Monday, February 4th, was inadvertently described last month as a "President" of the World Council of Churches. He is in fact Chairman of the Faith and Order Commission and also of the Board of the *Ecumenical Review*. He was at one time Professor of Practical Theology in the University of Lund. Several of his books have been published in English; the most recent was *Landmarks in the History of Preaching*, being the Donnellan Lectures which he delivered in the University of Dublin.

Rural Life Conference

Of the changes in the situation of mankind brought about in this century, none is more important than the quickening speed and growing extent of urbanization. Four-fifths of the human race may still be rural. But over large areas of every continent the concentration into towns proceeds apace, withdrawing energy and intelligence from many rural populations and damaging their social structure just when revolutions in the methods of husbandry are making special demands upon rural stability, character and adaptability. There is a gradual but widespread awakening to the tremendous implications of this development, and one of the efforts to cope with it is the establishment in this country of the Institute of Rural Life at Home and Overseas. The connections of the Institute extend far beyond the British, Dominion and Colonial countries whose problems are naturally its first concern.

* * * *

This body convened a Conference at High Leigh, Hoddesden, last month, which was attended by ninety delegates from India, East and West Africa, the Sudan, Jamaica, China, Fiji and Madagascar. Dr. Raymond Miller, Consultant to the United Nations F.A.O., flew from America to attend this meeting, and in his speech emphasized the dependence of the cause upon religion, "the most important motivation in man". For although, as this meeting on the whole believed, the effective use of present scientific knowledge could double the food crop of the world, such effective use presupposes

more than technical equipment. It demands the renovation of the human relations that make up a rural society. In several countries agricultural religious missions are reviving the traditional relation between Christian society and good husbandry. But the solution of the many problems involved depends very largely upon a successful interpretation of the rural world to the urban public. Present efforts to do this are still far too few, and completely inadequate.

The Bible and Medicine

A Conference of Psychotherapists, Psychoanalysts, and Theologians is to be held this Spring at the Ecumenical Institute, to consider the relations between pastoral care and the new psychological doctrines and methods. This is a territory on which, by the way, the Medical Group of the Christian Frontier Council has just undertaken some exploratory work. There is a good deal about it in a book we have just received from Switzerland, entitled *Bible et Médicine* by Dr. Paul Tournier of Geneva, a medical practitioner well known at the Institute.

Dr. Tournier has been a fine Bible student from his youth and has now re-read the whole of the Bible noting every passage with a bearing upon the medical art. The number of these is far greater than it would have been before the arrival of the analytical psychologies. Dr. Tournier gives some good instances of the significance of dreams in the Bible, and of how it may be heightened by what we know from contemporary psychological investigation. For instance, he traces the causality of Joseph's dream of the sun, moon and stars, back to earlier factors in his family's history. The whole book seems to us a wise and well-balanced work, a considerable contribution to the literature of " the Christian in his occupation ".

The Editorial Office is Removed

Will all readers yielding to the impulse to write to the Editors (would that more of them did so oftener !) please address their letters to the Editorial Office ? This has just removed to

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THE LAYMAN IN THE CHURCH

An Address given by MR. W. G. SYMONS, at a Frontier Luncheon at the Queen Mary Hall, W.C. 1, on December 13th, 1951.

I HAVE on my desk at home that enthralling piece of literature *Whitaker's Almanac*. If you look through it you will find duly listed in the proper place references to the churches and religious affairs. You will find them, to be precise, just after the Royal Air Force and before the Universities—I do not know whether there is any significance in that order of precedence!

This brings out a queer double character about religion. On the one hand religion is never *merely* part of life. Any faith worthy of the name makes claims which involve all that we are and do and which reach out beyond this world of space and time. And yet undoubtedly religion, in one sense, *is* a part of life—public worship and private devotion take up a portion, and for most of us a relatively small portion, of our time; Churches and religious societies exist as organizations among others; they compete with other bodies for building licences, and their full-time employees appear in Ministry of Labour returns of employed persons; the statistics of religious beliefs are a part of population studies; theology is a subject among others in our Universities.

The boundary between religious and secular affairs is difficult to trace. There are doubtful and borderline areas. Some people, I know, try to deny that division; they say "Everything is religious; nothing is secular". But I believe that leads to confusion, and that the truth may be better expressed in another way.

We live in a world where most people during their adult lives have to give their main efforts, their freshest powers of body and mind, to the concerns of secular life, and mainly to producing and making available the material things by which we live. Our churches might cease work for some

time and, whatever our ultimate impoverishment, life would go on. But if the milk does not arrive on your door-step to-morrow, it is a major disaster. If the ordinary processes of production and distribution are held up for more than a few days, people die. That is nothing to do with modern industry; indeed in a pre-industrial society an even greater proportion of human effort had to go to material production. It is simply that God has made the world like that. Just because secular and material affairs take up most of human time and energy, they form the main field in which we obey (or disobey) God's commands. They must be, it seems, as important in God's eyes as specifically religious things—or He would not have made them bulk so large in human life.

We believe that God is the Lord of the whole created world—that all things exist in His providence; that the whole of our lives must come under His judgement; that the redemption wrought in Christ demands a response taking in all that we do. That is the truth for which the Christian Frontier stands, in its own small way. Yet that does not remove the difference between "religious" and "secular" things. Religion is "something different" or why give it a name? However fully we try to do our duty in secular affairs, it remains true that prayer, public worship, the life of the Church and all that goes by the name "religious" have their proper, though limited, place in the whole.

My subject to-day is "The Layman in the Church". I am using the word "layman" to mean the great majority of Christian men (and women) who are engaged in ordinary *secular* occupations, including housework. There are, of course, a few unordained people who are engaged professionally in religious work (secretaries of religious societies, lay missionaries, etc.) but for the purpose of this talk I am grouping these with ministers of religion. One of the difficulties of understanding within the Church is a subtle difference of perspective between ordinary laymen and ministers. I am not suggesting that this difference is very deep or impossible to bridge; it is, however, elusive and

leads to many misunderstandings. It springs out of the the difference between the secular and the religious with which I started. Briefly, the minister is concerned during his working time with religious affairs ; his life is organized around a religious centre. He may have secular interests (politics, gardening or watching football matches) but they are extras and are mainly done in his spare time. For the layman this order is precisely reversed. Secular affairs occupy his working time ; the whole of religious life and the life of the Church is a spare-time matter.

This difference of perspective shows itself in various ways. For example, some Ecumenical documents on " The Christian concern with the secular " have shown a distinctively clerical viewpoint. They start from " the Faith " and reach out, as it were, to secular affairs, to politics and civic responsibilities. The " secular " seems to be a voluntary extra which the Christian ought to be concerned with, but is apt to overlook. Yet for the *layman* the secular world can never be that. However important his religion is in his life, he still has a block of secular duties, chiefly at work, which he cannot avoid. These secular duties remain there, whether or not he succeeds in tracing a relationship between them and his faith.

The ordinary layman's time and effort therefore break broadly into three sections : (1) Work ; (2) Secular spare time (to give it a name) ; (3) Religious duties. These three parts of life are distinct and largely separate from each other, but you remain the same person in each. An important decision which we all have to make is to balance our time and effort between them and to see the relationship between the things we do in each.

Firstly, our work—this subject has been attracting increasing attention recently in Church circles, and is plainly of central importance.[1] What is the relation between God's

[1] See for example, *Work in Modern Society* (S.C.M. Press, Ltd.) a study by Dr. J. H. Oldham for the World Council of Churches.

plan of redemption and the secular work which takes up the main time and effort of most people in the world, including most Christian believers? That is no new problem and the lack of clear Church teaching about it is of old standing. Perhaps one reason for that lack is that, ever since the immediate post-apostolic days, the articulate teaching of the Church has mainly been in the hands of the professional ministry. It is no exaggeration to say that has been at the heart of some of the great conflicts which have shaken the life of the Church. The Reformation is a clear example. The best medieval thinking may have had a grasp of the relation of worship and work—of "the religious" and "the secular". It remains true however that many Christian people in the middle ages came to believe that the full Christian life could be lived only within a religious Order or in the Priesthood. Ordinary secular life in the world was a religious "second-best". Luther challenged the unreformed Church at this point. His doctrine of the "calling" was a denial of a clericalized understanding of life which appeared to de-value the position of 99 per cent of Christian people. Yet, even in our Reformed Churches, this lesson has not been fully learned. Much of our teaching, at least as understood by ordinary members of congregations, is ambiguous and hesitating at this point. There are many ordinary people who carry on their work with a sense of doubt or frustration—believing in their hearts that "true Christian service" means an occupation like being a missionary or parson.

One point needs special mention. How far should we use the circumstances of our work as opportunities for evangelism? The story is told of a man who was converted and went to his Pastor asking what he should do next. "What is your job?" said the Pastor. "An engine driver," replied the man. "Right," said the Pastor, "your job is to convert the fireman." Even as respectable a body as the Church of England has suggested the same thing. The report "Towards the Conversion of England" suggests

that the main Christian responsibility of the laity in their work is that of " using the opportunities for evangelism daily afforded by their various professions, crafts and occupations." What is the truth about this ? All Christian people, laymen included, have a plain responsibility for evangelism ; and we cannot lay down in any rigid way how this will be done. Yet I believe that the attitude contained in the story of the engine driver or in the Church of England report is too simple. Firstly, we do not choose our workmates ; and there may be a real lack of courtesy in using the unchosen contacts of our work for pressing our views on others. Secondly, and more fundamentally, we work with our colleagues in order *to get the job done*. That is our primary responsibility and I believe that it is given us by God. As St. Paul suggests in Thessalonians, our duty here is one of plain honesty. To *use* our job as a means of evangelism may involve a prostitution of God's calling to serve Him *in* our work. Of course, there may be opportunities at work when we may witness to our faith ; and often actions will speak louder than words. Yet we can afford to leave that to God. Any self-conscious attempt to work well so as " to show how good Christianity is " ruins both the work and the witness. Evangelism, in the sense of the conscious witnessing to the truth of the Christian religion, is part, but only part, of our whole obedience to God. The normal content of that obedience while at work is in honestly doing the job. One of the difficulties of the clerical approach is a common failure to distinguish these diverse parts in our total Christian obedience.

We next come to that part of our life to which I have given the clumsy title of our " secular spare-time ". There are all the more obvious and unavoidable spare time occupations—eating, sleeping, the ordinary recreations of the body and mind and the many demands which family life make, including keeping the garden in order and the house in repair ! Our spare time concerns do not end there however. We are constantly reminded in the pages of *The*

Frontier, as well as in many sermons and addresses, of our concern as Christians for social righteousness—in civic affairs, in the life of our town and nation, and in our professions or occupations. Yet these concerns can never be made effective *within* the confines of Christian groups. We may, in some cases, be awakened to this responsibility within our churches or religious societies; if we are to do anything about it we have to do so in secular organizations.

Our civic concern, whether on the local or national plane, has to be made effective in the machinery of government and in politics. For a great many people this means working in the ordinary party-political machines. That is where many decisions of politics are made and where the people who are to govern us are chosen. Even at the simplest level, political work of this sort involves a great deal of spare time effort by many people. The secretary of a Ward Party or the member of a local political committee has to do plenty of paper work and to give up many evenings to it.

It is the same with the Trade Unions or professional associations which decide so much of what goes on in our various jobs. However much of this work is done by the professional secretaries, the life of the Union or the association can only be wholesome if a great deal is still carried by the "lay" membership. Anyone who has called on a Trade Union branch secretary in the evening and found him writing up his minutes and sorting out long membership lists after a full day's work in the factory realizes something of what Trade Union life demands from its lay officials.

And so at last we come to the organized life of the Church and of religious bodies. Here the double sense which I mentioned at the beginning comes in again. The Church is not simply *one* organization among many; it exists in its own right. If we know anything of what life in the redeemed community, in the body of Christ, means we will not try to defend the Church on the ground that it is useful in society or that it is important in order to maintain moral

standards or anything like that. The Church is the home of our souls through which we have access to all that Saint Paul was talking of when he spoke of " the unsearchable riches of Christ ". This life is self-authenticating and the Christian has no need to defend it on other grounds. And yet the Church is an organization among others. It is a society which makes demands on the money and the spare time of its lay members ; it takes you out on Tuesday evening for a Deacons' meeting and on Thursday evening for the Choir practice.

There are so many things that have to be done if the organized life of the Church is to be carried on that it would take a whole series of talks to outline them. The money has to be found for paying the minister, heating the church and so on. A hundred routine jobs have to be done. I want to pick out two items, not because they are supremely important but because they are of some *Frontier* interest. They are teaching and Church government.

When we think of Church teaching there is a temptation at first to " leave it to the parson ". Yet that has never been possible in any branch of the Church. Much religious teaching has always fallen on the laity—for example Sunday School work and teaching the young. No one can say that teaching of that sort is unimportant or easy. I believe that there are deeper reasons which make a direct participation of the laity in the teaching ministry of the Church not merely unavoidable but vital for its full life. In his recent book *Tradition and the Spirit*, Daniel Jenkins has pointed out that the on-going life of the Church depends on a constant conversation or encounter (to use metaphors) between the Word of the living God and men and women in the situations in which they are placed. An essential part of that encounter is the effort at the human plane to make articulate, at each stage in history, what the Word of God means to us now. That constant activity of " prophecy " (or of making articulate) must always go on. Otherwise preaching becomes merely a handing on of dead and formalized tradition.

I believe that the full Ministry of the Word is only possible if it uses *both* the professional minister and the layman. It requires the full range of professional equipment—the understanding of texts in the original tongues, technical exegesis and the intellectual and devotional discipline which should be the equipment of the professional minister. On the other hand, it also demands an awareness of the situation which, because of the fact of perspective which we noticed above, is never fully accessible to the professional minister. There is no uniform pattern by which these two aspects of our experience of the Word may be brought into living contact. Different churches have achieved it in different ways, and in varying degrees.

It is, I think, no accident that at the present time laymen have taken an active part, not only in discussing the "applications of the faith", but in expounding the faith itself. Names like T. S. Eliot, C. S. Lewis and Dorothy Sayers spring to mind. At the recent conference of Christian youth at Bangor it was noteworthy that the two addresses which were most widely remembered were concerned, not with Christian duty, but with an exposition of the nature of the Faith by laymen speaking from their lay experience.

Our own British history affords evidence at this point. We often hear, in Church circles, that industrial life has caused people to drift away from the Church. It is sometimes forgotten that the Methodist and evangelical revivals in England were strong among ordinary industrial workers in the older industrial areas of the country. For a time, the level of religious devotion among such people was higher than in other sections of the population.[2] What happened in the Methodist Revival? We all know about John Wesley riding through England on horseback. But this was not the whole picture; the Methodist Church in its formative days depended on hundreds of "Class Leaders" exercising a constant pastoral office and on "Local Preach-

[2] See for example, Beatrice Webb, *My Apprenticeship*, chapter three.

ers " taking a large part in the ministry of preaching. All of these were ordinary lay people, mostly working in the same trades and occupations as those to whom they were ministering. So, even to-day, in one of the largest denominations in our land, over three-quarters of the services on any Sunday are entirely in lay hands—a fact which often causes surprise among Churchmen from Europe or the U.S.A. This close participation of the laymen in both the teaching and pastoral ministry is not to be accepted simply and uncritically ; there is much in " lay preaching " as it is practised in this country in need of reform. Yet it is a fact of our religious history which is of greater importance than we sometimes realize. To take a modest example, it has given us a Socialist movement which is utterly incomprehensible to Continental Socialists, schooled in rationalism or Marxism. And in an earlier age, it gave us John Bunyan !

Different forms of Church Order vary widely, yet in almost all the laity take some part in the organs of Church Government. I believe this is needed because " we have our treasures in earthen vessels ". Anyone who knows the inherent drag of any professional machine will know the dangers which arise when a professional group has power over its own affairs with no scrutiny from outside. If the government of the Church is entirely in the hands of the professional ministry, precisely that same danger arises. In saying this I am not suggesting that the professional ministry are more selfish, fallible or grasping for power than other men—since such a charge would be patently false. They are however, subject to sin like other men, and the Church is not exempt from the forces which move any organized society. For that reason, lay men and women must take some part in Church Government, for the health of the Church itself. That is not so easy, though. For one thing, it is very difficult to find a time when a joint assembly of ministers and laymen doing ordinary jobs can meet. The week-ends are impossible for one and mid-week for the others. In many of our church courts and denominational

committees, the lay participation is more formal than real, consisting of a few people who are retired or in abnormal jobs. What is the remedy?

Some people may feel a sense of oppression at this point; if what I have said is true, they are being called on for more activity in a world already busy enough. To which it may be said that "Candidates are not expected to answer all the questions at once". We need to limit ourselves to a small number of subjects which we can really master. Yet we cannot just leave it there. There is I believe a need for *balance* in our choice of activities and duties. This need is illustrated by a conversation I had with a friend. We were discussing a mutual acquaintance. "Oh yes" said my friend, "I used to know old———. We worked together in the machine shop. But he went into Trade Union work and I took up Sunday School teaching, so we drifted apart." There is a real danger of people dividing into two groups. In the first group there are those giving their time and effort to political and social affairs, to the service of their town, trade or profession; their church commitments become limited to Sunday worship and in the end even that drops out, until they join the large number of people with a mere vestigial Christian allegiance. Then in the second group there are others, just as competent and with as wide interests, who find themselves taken up increasingly in Church organization. They get landed with Sunday School teaching, with lay preaching, with many local, regional and national offices in the church. This happens less by deliberate choice than by the natural course of events. In contrast, a generation or so ago there were many people, especially in smaller towns and industrial villages, who took active leadership in Church affairs and also in the life of the town, in politics and trade union affairs. There are some such people still. On the whole, however, and especially in the larger towns where travelling takes up more time, a process of separation has gone on; there are now two separate communities—that of the active Church-goer who has little spare time for

other affairs ; and of those busy in civic affairs but with little time for Church work.

What does this mean in our ordinary Church life ? That is too large a question to answer here. Some quite simple points arise. In one church which I knew, we did not expect regular church commitments to take more than one evening a week as for any individual member. Anyone who was tempted to be on Church premises more than this was probably failing to take his or her share in local affairs ; as a matter of Church policy they were encouraged to lessen their Church commitments. In view of the shortage of active lay officers, it is very difficult to get a Church to adopt a " self-denying " rule of this type ; yet I believe that in the long run such a rule would benefit the Church and the community as a whole. The local congregation should have the sort of life that those who are active in the affairs of their town or occupation can keep their roots in the fellowship of the Church. That means a greater interest by each of us in the things the others are doing outside the walls of the Church itself. We need greater opportunities than exist in most congregations for common thought, within the society of the Church, in which minister and lay members can join. In this way, the fellowship can be strengthened and, in some small way, the conversation between the Word of God and the life of the world maintained.

IS IT REALLY NECESSARY?

by Helmut Gollwitzer

A lecture broadcast over Radio Hilversum

HOW times are changing! What would a Dutchman have said during the evil summer of 1940, if someone had prophesied: in five years you will have disarmed the vanquished German nation and after another five years you will have armed them again, and even be indignant at their failure to rejoice over it. He would have considered both prophesies unlikely, and the last downright impossible.

That the Germans might become anti-militarists seemed inconceivable. But as a matter of fact, the aversion among the German people against any German rearmament is much more widespread than it might appear from the German press. Behind it, naturally, are widely different motives. Pro-communist feelings are playing a lesser rôle than does the strong feeling of resentment against the victorious powers, plus the fear lest a civil war might break out in Germany, and a feeling of aversion, on the part of numerous veterans, against renewed killing, and, in some cases, an irresponsible "leave-me-out" attitude. The western nations have the impression that the Germans are selfishly trying to escape their duty of joining in a common defence of the West, while letting the sons of other nations shed their blood for them. The arguments heard in Germany, against remilitarization, had appeared to reflect only a solicitude for German interests and to ignore a joint European obligation, so that many people in the West became indignant and condemned the Germans. Yesterday they were militarists for national reasons, to-day they are pacifists for national reasons; but never do they think beyond their narrow national horizon.

However, let us bear in mind that among those Germans who are opposed to the contemplated remilitarization are

men who, generally, are not devotees of a narrow-minded nationalism but who, impelled by their Christian conscience, and as responsible representatives of the Christian Church, are raising their voices in warning not only on behalf of the German nation, but also in the interests of imperilled world peace. The western nations and their governments would be wise, therefore, to give serious consideration to the reasons which guide these men. I shall try to present them briefly.

But first, it is necessary to remember those things, with regard to which all earnest people, in Germany and the rest of the world, agree, be they for or against German rearmament (ignoring the communists who are the fifth Column of the Kremlin). All sensible Germans, Dutch, Americans, etc. are, first of all, united in regarding German rearmament as something undesirable. Even those who favour it, do not welcome it. They accept it as an evil, however necessary. This we must never forget; even those who regard German rearmament as necessary must continuously bear in mind that it is, without doubt, a deplorable step, a dangerous and ominous measure that had better be avoided altogether, or, at least, postponed as long as possible, and one that could, at best, arouse the enthusiasm of an SS general only.

We also agree that such a measure must be taken if the defence of Europe demands it. If a serious emergency should finally arise, with a Soviet attack actually under way, the Germans should and would take up arms. There could be no talk, then, of their playing the rôle of a spectator while the sons of the rest of Europe would be shedding their blood. The first to bleed will be the Germans, and they will not only bleed but fight, also.

We are further agreed that it must be the aim of present-day policy to prevent such an emergency from arising. In this the European nations are even more interested than the Americans. For while the latter may hope to win this last battle, many Europeans, and especially Germans, may not

survive the first one. That is why we agree that the rearmament of the West is meant to be defensive and must continue to be so, for its objective is to deter the Soviets from any aggressive war and to make them, instead, join in a round-table conference. There must be no other aim but to preserve and stabilize peace. This being the case, we must examine every measure as to whether it promotes or hinders the achievement of such an objective.

Hence, the question with regard to the Germans should not be stated as it often is, namely: Will German divisions be necessary for the defence of Europe in the event of an emergency? For, in the event of an emergency, if West-Germany remains unarmed, hundreds of thousands of German veterans will be made available, in short order, except for such short delay as may be required to arm them. Rather, should the question be stated thus: Are German divisions needed now in order to warn the Soviets? One year ago, under the impact of the shock caused by the North-Korean attack, people might have disagreed about this. But to-day all the European capitals agree on one more point, namely that, as a result of the progress of western rearmament, particularly in the case of the U.S.A., we are no longer faced with the acute danger of an attack from the East.

The fear of an attack is now shifting from the West to the East. The further progress of western rearmament will intensify this trend, and will probably make the Russians ready for serious negotiations, and face the West with the question what it is to negotiate about, and whether it should offer the Soviets a *modus vivendi*, acceptable to them, or present them as ultimatum with such great demands as to force the Russians to a battle of desperation, thus bringing about the very war that we wish to avoid. But if it is the aim of the West to achieve a stable *modus vivendi* with the Soviets, then the negotiations will be seriously handicapped by the existence of West-German divisions, and their build-up will have proved to have been a rash and disastrous action.

Since the task of warning the Russians has been largely accomplished, even in the absence of German divisions, and even more can be accomplished in the future, we must ask in all earnestness whether the rearmament of Western Germany is really an unavoidable necessity. Is it necessary to conjure up the danger and the harm that might result from such a step, when it is possible to get along without it ?

The danger and the harm concern not merely the German people but the common interests of the West as a whole. Some of these elements may be summed up thus :

1. The West-German rearmament, it cannot be denied, will intensify, not relieve, international tension. It will increase the danger of nervous reactions on the part of the Kremlin and, therefore, the danger of war, instead of removing such danger ; it will also complicate, during the forth coming negotiations, the task of determining a concept of European peace, acceptable to the Soviets. And that is the very thing a responsible western policy must aim at. It will mean war if we try to force the Soviets, not to limit their ambitions, but to commit political suicide.
2. The eastern nations believe that American divisions at the Elbe river have a defensive purpose, and, at the same time, they secretly await them as their liberators from the Soviet regime. Of German divisions the Poles, Czechs, etc., would only expect bloody acts of revenge. The nations of the eastern bloc are thus forced to stick to their communist governments ; the Soviet regime is given an effective means of propaganda and its domestic position is greatly strengthened.
3. In spite of the economic revival in West-Germany, the social burdens, resulting from the war, are more heavily felt than elsewhere in Europe. If, because of the re-armament costs, the removal of these burdens is rendered more difficult, and if the social misery increases there even more, then this part of the western front, hitherto

comparatively immune from communist infection, will become a centre of danger, similar to France and Italy. However, unlike Hitler, Stalin can use two weapons: the Red Army and the undermining of society. At a decisive section of the western front a hole would be stopped in the military defence system but a social hole would be torn open simultaneously. This is another reason why the West should refrain from stopping the military hole by means of German divisions.

4. The interests not only of Germany but of the entire West, call for the reunification of Germany; but many people in the West are shortsighted and do not realize this necessity. Once a West-German army is in existence, the Soviets will refuse to discuss the liberation of Eastern Germany, and the creation of a stable peace in Europe will thus become impossible.

5. According to Adenauer we shall have a West-German army of 250,000 men. What will they be like, the people that are to compose the large corps of officers and non-commissioned officers? It is an unpardonable illusion if we believe that the spirit displayed by this corps will be different from the spirit displayed by the old Nazi army. Even the sub-ordination to an all-Europe Supreme Command will not banish the old spirit. The rearmament of West-Germany will be a decisive step toward the re-nazification of Germany.

6. The lack of German divisions is one factor among others which forces the American policy to remain defensive. The European nations who would be the first victims of a new war, all have an interest in retaining, as long as possible, this retarding factor which will act as a deterrent to the Americans whenever, in dealing with Russia, they should be tempted to pursue a preventive policy, or a policy of ultimatums that involves the risk of war.

Nowadays we are better off than a year ago. That is why we ask all those who consider the organization of

German divisions a necessary evil: Is it really necessary? Would it not be better if American and West-European divisions were to keep guard on the Elbe-river in order to scare the Soviets and maintain peace, and if the German nation's contribution toward safeguarding the West would take some form other than the military one?

The Church is not interfering inadmissably in politics when the warning against the rearming of West Germany comes from church circles, from men like Niemöeller, Heinemann and others. The Church's responsibility is to warn whenever peace is endangered, whenever sober reasoning is paralyzed by impatience or fear. He who listens to the Gospel will not become a rapturous visionary; he will be an objective judge of politics. His aim will be, not a crusade or conquest, but the preservation of peace and justice. Whoever bears this in mind will delay, as long as possible, the day when Germany is to be re-armed.

GERMANY HAS TO CHOOSE

A Comment on Professor Gollwitzer's Question

IN the following comments upon Professor Gollwitzer's broadcast, which we find impressive, our intention is less to prove the necessity of German re-armament than to estimate the force of this case against it. There are many elsewhere, besides in Germany, who feel this as "a dangerous and ominous measure, better postponed as long as possible". But one must keep in mind throughout this controversy that it is *normal* for a people to be able and ready to defend itself and *abnormal* for it not to be. Sooner or later Germany must and will be re-armed (unless everyone else is disarmed which it would be unwise to hope or at least expect in any immediate future); whether sooner or later, however, may well determine the political aims to which its armed strength is directed. In any case, there is no question of re-creating an independent German Army at this stage.

Professor Gollwitzer's case is not pacifist. "If a serious emergency for Europe should finally arise . . . the Germans should and would take up arms". This seems to conceal a misjudgment on a purely military point. The idea of a people springing to arms and barring the way to an invader, at least in a country like Germany, is surely

unrealistic in terms of modern warfare. If German fighting power is to be effective, and economical in the expenditure of German lives, it must have been organized and equipped and trained with the other defensive forces of the West long before the event. It is no use waiting until a Soviet attack is actually under way. This is of course one reason why the problem of German rearmament is being raised now.

We are all agreed that the rearmament of the West is meant to be defensive and must continue to be so. But Professor Gollwitzer says that Western rearmament, especially in the U.S.A., is already so far advanced that there is no acute danger of attack from the East ; and claims that on this point " all European capitals are agreed ". We demur, not on our own authority but on that of General Eisenhower. We have not heard of any responsible Western authority claiming that the West is now militarily secure. Indeed, the whole point of raising this troublous question of German rearmament surely is that without the extra manpower represented by the German contribution we cannot hope to achieve security. Were it not for this point, we would all far sooner leave the wretched matter alone.

In what he says about the hope of achieving a *modus vivendi* between the West and the Soviets, Professor Gollwitzer shows that German anxieties are almost identical with our own. A *modus vivendi* is indeed the nub of the question—simple to state but hard to contrive. The object of Western rearmament is, of course, to make Russia see that she cannot impose her will on Europe by force but must come to terms with the West. It might no doubt have the effect of scaring Russia into a panic " defensive " war ; whether it does or does not will depend partly on Russian psychological reactions (which we cannot control and are usually not very good at guessing) and partly on our making our terms of settlement clear at an early date—and, of course, on those terms being reasonable and not humiliating. What we have yet to find out is, first, what terms we should consider reasonable (one occasionally reads or hears tentative discussions on this point and it may be assumed that the question is not entirely unregarded by our own and other Governments) and, secondly, whether the Russians would or could accept any settlement which we should think tolerable. Professor Gollwitzer has assumed that we are already in a strong enough position to force this showdown ; as stated above, we venture to doubt this. But it is clear from recent UNO meetings that we are already strong enough to make the Russians uneasy and disposed to go through the first motions of real negotiation, although they have not yet lost hope of weakening the Western rearmament drive or splitting the Western alliance. We do not see why the existence of West German divisions as part of a European army should prove fatal to discussions with Russia : they appear rather to be a necessary part of the force required to bring Russia to reason.

Professor Gollwitzer, however, asks why we should conjure up the danger and harm that might result from such a step when we can get along without it. Once again—a false premise. The *threat* to re-arm Germany, if not the German divisions in being, is necessary to bring Russia to terms. Russia may well be willing to yield a good deal in order to prevent German rearmament being proceeded with but, experience suggests (*a*) that she would retract as much as she could if she saw that German rearmament had been dropped, and (*b*) that she would not yield as much to an insecurely armed West (i.e. without German support) as she would to a solidly secure West. In any case, if we talk about a " stable *modus vivendi* ", do we not mean one which will last as a normal arrangement for an indefinite period ? But any arrangement of this kind, to be normal, must include a Germany with the usual arrangements for self-defence, whether autonomous or in association with others : the " neutral ", Gandhist, Germany is a figment of German fear and wishful thinking.

It is important to bear in mind that no one is in fact proposing at this stage the revival of an autonomous German army. The basis on which German rearmament is now being considered is that of the European Defence Community, in which Germany will not recruit a separate, independent German force. This is regarded by the French and others as the essential safeguard against many of the dangers to which Professor Gollwitzer alludes, including that of unduly provoking the Russians or encouraging a renewed German *Drang nach Osten*. Germany will not be free to rearm as she likes and there will for some time to come be certain restrictions upon her sovereign rights, arising out of the European Defence Community, out of the continued division of Germany and the necessity for retaining certain Allied sovereign rights there—in respect of Berlin, for example.

Apart from the question of sheer military need, a German contribution to European defence would be the outward expression of a choice which in fact Germans are free to make and perhaps can fairly be called upon to make—a choice not so much between West and East (since we do not believe that any but a very small minority of Germans actively desires the victory of Communism) but between overtly joining the association of Western nations for defensive purposes and trying to remain morally and politically " on the fence ". The latter course of action, like all political courses, attracts a very diverse collection of supporters, including not only men of high principle, like Professor Gollwitzer, who are racked by genuine moral and spiritual doubts, but also old-fashioned nationalists and militarists who do not wish Germany to lose her bargaining power by committing herself at this stage and, of course, Communists or their allies who, seeing that a choice in favour of the East is unlikely, wish at least to prevent a declaration in favour of the West. In this con-

nection we may perhaps also recall that in fact the proposal that Germany should participate in European defence came in the first place from a German source which cannot be dismissed as reactionary, namely Dr. Adenauer.

In what he says about the East European nations, Professor Gollwitzer makes a strong point—namely that while they believe the Americans at the Elbe have a defensive purpose, at the same time they secretly await them as their future liberators from Soviet oppression, whereas Poles or Czechs would only expect " bloody acts of revenge " from the rearmed German forces. The change would make them more resigned to Russian rule and give Moscow more propagandist power over them. The force of this argument will be admitted by anyone who remembers how influential a part the first, faint murmurings of German rearmament played in stampeding non-Communist Czechs into the arms of the Communists in February, 1948. But it is not conclusive, if German support is in fact essential to Western defence. Further (*a*) we need not use German troops in Poland or Czechoslovakia (if indeed it ever proves necessary to cross the frontiers of these countries at all); (*b*) We refuse to believe that German rearmament will in fact make Poles or Czechs co-operate more enthusiastically with Russia (although we have a tricky time ahead of us over the Oder–Neisse line); (*c*) for better or for worse, the two nations concerned have sooner or later got to get used to the idea of living next to a normal Germany, i.e., one not permanently disarmed and held down. If necessary, then, we must make a present of this point to Soviet propaganda, which has already made full use of it anyway.

Are the " social burdens resulting from the war more heavily felt (in Germany) than elsewhere in Europe " ? We are not sure. They are grave everywhere, and re-armament is unquestionably an additional load; but there is no proof that resolution in defence policy increases the liability to communist infiltration, perhaps rather the reverse. And in shouldering her portion of the burden Germany will only be sharing the lot of all free nations, not excluding America. At the same time, it is only fair to recall that in the problem of the refugees Germany has a social burden such as no other European country (except on a far smaller scale, Finland) has to shoulder.

Professor Gollwitzer argues that the interests of the West require German re-unification, though many in Western countries do not realize it, and that this would be prevented by the existence of a West-Germany army, because the Soviets would thenceforth refuse altogether to discuss the liberation of the Eastern zone. We find this reasoning confused. People in the West do realize the need for the reunion of East and West Germany, without prejudice to the question of the eventual eastern frontier of the former. Surely, though, it is

improbable that the Russians will ever let go of Eastern Germany, except under pressure? They will certainly try to exact a high price for its release, e.g. the continuance of their hold on the other satellite countries; but it does not follow that, whatever the circumstances, they will "refuse to discuss" the restoration of East Germany, provided (*a*) that they see that their plan for a highly armed, highly organized Communist East Germany is not going to work out as they had hoped, and (*b*) that they get a good price for evacuation. Meanwhile, it will indeed be hard if the only German armed forces whose existence is to be tolerated are those armed by the Russians in East Germany.

And this brings us to what is surely the gloomiest of all Professor Gollwitzer's speculations—namely, the human composition and spirit of the new West-German army envisaged by Herr Adenauer. "*Even its subordination to an all Europe Supreme Command*" will not, according to the Professor's pitiless misgivings, banish the Nazi spirit from its corps of commissioned and non-commissioned officers; to suppose it will is an "unpardonable illusion". Coming from a German of high intelligence, this is indeed a serious warning. It may quite easily be true, and if so we are indeed in a dilemma. We need German help to be secure, but if we rearm Germany, we shall be reviving Nazism! If this indeed be so, what hope in fact is there, since sooner or later Germany must recover the right of self-defence? Time, presumably, must be left to do its work, before Germany can safely be re-entrusted with weapons. We respect German anxiety on this point, but it is a frightening comment on the inability of reasonable Germans, even when taught by adversity, to control either their own worst instincts or, alternatively, those who embody them.

We can hardly help wondering whether this speaker does not belong to the school of thought which regards all power, in the hands of whomsoever, as simply uncontrollable; for he goes on to cast the same aspersion upon the Americans. The lack of German divisions, in his view, forces American policy to remain on the defensive; and all Europe therefore has an interest in maintaining this "retarding factor", lest the Americans succumb to the temptation of a policy of preventive action, ultimatums or the risk of war. We find it saddening that a man of Professor Gollwitzer's wisdom and insight can believe that American policy is likely to be a policy of deliberate aggression. It is a measure both of the extent to which Communist propaganda has penetrated non-communist minds and the way in which American reputation is jeopardised by irresponsible Americans. One is familiar with this suspicion in our own country, but we know of no evidence to justify it in the action or utterance of responsible Americans—i.e., of Americans actually responsible in the highest posts, or likely to be so, for the ultimate issues of peace or war. The pity, and the paradox,

is that in the next paragraph the Professor relies on these unreliable Americans to keep guard on the Elbe and asks if the German nation's defence of the West cannot take some other, non-military form. We do not know what other form he has in mind, and perhaps a concrete proposal on this point would be helpful.

Views of which this recent broadcast is in general representative are held, we are assured, by some of our Christian brethren in Germany, men with impressive records of resistance to Nazi tyranny. Deeply as we sympathize with Germans who feel as they do, is not this feeling a symptom of spiritual and psychological exhaustion, which may do untold harm to the German nation by taking some of its choicest spirits out of the fight and leaving its leadership, as it revives, to coarser hands? One knows that many in the East are indeed bearing witness to their convictions, and that is always worthy of honour. But one is not thereby convinced that, for instance, Dr. Niemoller is in fact showing his countrymen the right path. There is such a thing as heroic wrong-headedness.

MAN NO ANIMAL

OUR forefathers were made in the image of God; we are made in the image of a Gibbon or a Spectral Tarsier. More ingenious and baleful than the other primates, we are still their second cousins; and if we repudiate them our very bones rise in witness against us.

Now of these antipodal estimates of man, I take the first to be the truer, even at the biological level of discussion. For a man's real physique is nothing like an ape's, and no more simian than his mind.

It is true that at the core of his physique there can be found an animal's. But this nucleus is an organ rather than an organism, and by itself incapable of any specifically human function, even of life. For example, this five-fingered hand is no true hand, but only a stump, an animal limb-bud from which human hands may presently burgeon, a socket for whatever limb-ending the human occasion requires, a universal joint to which every kind of human organ—spade, plough, hammer, pneumatic drill, brush,

violin-bow—may be fitted in an instant, and as quickly removed. Again, this tender and pallid skin is no true epidermis, but the mesodern underlying colourful and ever-changing human skins of wool and cotton and silk. Well may Bramston exclaim: "Without black velvet breeches what is man?" To undress is to unman. There are many layers to a human being, all of them vital. An unhoused man is less a man than an unhoused snail is a mollusc. Amputate his reaper-jaws browsing in another continent, his factory-stomachs digesting his food stage by stage till at last it is fit for the innermost animal stomach, his water-main-mouth sucking at the reservoir in the hills, his drain-bowel voiding into the sea, his library-brain holding his memory and guiding his thought—amputate these and the rest of his extended physique, and only a corpse is left on the operating table.

Clearly this luxuriant human growth—this peripheral development which makes men of us—is very unlike the animal growth which it prolongs. But it is none the less animate and animating for that. Through it we are more active, and so more actual; more alive to more, and so more alive. Nor is it a set of appendages. For learning how to use a tool is learning how to incorporate it. Till my pen is so ingrown and grafted to me that I feel the grain of the paper against the nib, till my chair-legs are so much mine that I am no longer a biped sitting but a quadruped standing, till I am so continuous with my tail and wing-tips that it is I who thrust and slice the upper air, till I am so thoroughly in the ship that I am in the sea, till I am so comfortable on the car-seat that I am not on it but on the road—till then I am only partially embodied. The expert is bigger than the novice. He no more holds on to the wheel or the joy-stick than his shoulders hold on to his arms: all are absorbed into his total body, his organism-for-the-time-being.

Moreover this new evolutionary departure, so far from negating the old, carries on its works much more swiftly and effectively. It is the sudden and deliberate flower of the

other's root, obeying the same basic laws of growth all the more loyally for becoming aware of them. As ages ago our trunks grew fins and our fins grew feet, so now—but at how different a pace—our feet grow shoes and our shoes grow hobnails and skates and rubbers. For all such human gear, like the animal gear it extends, arises from a few great mutations and many small variations—novelties which, when sifted by changing environments, produce every kind of adaptation. Man is immeasurably more adaptable than a beast because he is immeasurably more adapted: with each of his thousand unique hands he grasps a unique world. The counterpart of his life's richness is the richness of the body with which he lives it.

There is even a sense in which the tool is more alive than the arm it terminates. This new physique means new freedom—freedom to use countless materials and devices denied to the old, freedom to invent and not merely to adapt, freedom to start again, freedom to plan ahead, freedom to experiment without risk of extinction—and greater freedom exercised is intenser life lived. Now it is no longer the organism which goes to the scrap-heap, but only the organ. As often as our hand offends us we may cut it off and fit another. Indeed its handiness lies more in the ease of its amputation than of its growth. My telephone would be a death-dealing and not a life-giving organ if it were a permanent system of ears and vocal cords, a thing of flesh and blood to be dragged around and never painlessly shed, a net of nerve fibres instead of wires, irreplaceable and unrepairable and unimprovable equipment born and dying with the rest of me. Aluminium wings serve life better for being dead and featherless: as detachable, they are all the more firmly joined to the living whole. They are the true wings, of which the bird's are only prototypes.

Prototypes—and deformations. For every specialized animal limb-ending—wing, talon, flipper, hoof, paw—is in its way a malignant growth, a tool which has seized the user, a constriction of the organism and therefore of its universe.

Man alone remains an unspoiled animal, uncommitted by his flesh to any narrow way of life, and that is why he is also no animal. Each of the others has impatiently taken on some human tool, and that is why it remains an animal. It is a prematurely expert man—a masterly aviator, or sailor, or runner, or social organizer, or hunter, or dandy—but the price of becoming permanently human in one respect is staying permanently subhuman in all others. He, on the other hand, is content to remain the universal amateur, able to ride countless hobby-horses because none rides him. Animals are consistently up-to-date, and therefore live in the past ; he is always falling behind the evolutionary times, and therefore moves with them and moves them. They stick to their jobs (or rather their jobs stick to them) ; they have made up their minds, and are never lazy and incompetent and poor. He alone bungles, and forgets his job, and takes time off, and changes his mind and his body. To rise above these human limitations is to fall into animality. It is when modern man is only modern that he is the inferior of his ancestors.

The measure of his mind, then, is not so much his giant body as his power of putting off this body, his faculty of reversion ; for human nature includes the necessity to divest itself of human nature. The mere animal becomes and unbecomes every animal, and therefore is no animal.

Here is our answer to those who argue from our animal past to our animal present, from the shape of our skeletons and embryos to the shape of our minds, from our little craniums to our little souls. Man is not what he seems. He is the elastic organism, the brain which adds to itself and subtracts all other brains, the body which grows and shrinks to match the situation, the deciduous world-tree. You know where an animal ends and its world begins, but you can never by external inspection tell a man's extent. For to think and feel as a human being is to think and feel your way into and out of many worlds, and to have godlike immensity.

D. E. HARDING.

REVIEWS

Authority and Delinquency in the Modern State, by Alex Comfort. Routledge and Kegan Paul. 8s. 6d.

Dr. Comfort, who brings to this book a wide acquaintance with the social sciences and psychiatry, is also a poet and a novelist. This appears in the radical clarity of his insight into the human and universal aspects of specifically modern problems in the working of a centralized political and industrial society, but also, perhaps less happily, in a disposition to dramatize his social types as symbols of delinquency. The book might be compared to a tour round the modern state regarded as analogous to Dante's hell, where in every circle of political and industrial activity some form of perversity finds release and expression, but not punishment. With much in the underlying thesis all Christians will violently disagree, but I do not think they can complain that Dr. Comfort's diagnosis of evil is not sufficiently radical. He knows that the world's ills cannot be cured by any plan imposed from a world government, for the larger the area of government, the greater the perversion of power. Nor can we return to a pre-industrial autarchy. He finds most wisdom in anarchist writers, but not in anarchy as a nostrum. His hope, and it is a slender one, if I understand him rightly, lies " in the agency of what Christian theologians have termed charity, and what we may term human solidarity ", diffused first of all in the family, where human character is formed before the age of eight.

> " It would be perfectly possible to make a case that the changes in a given culture that might follow a shift in the pattern of infant-feeding behaviour are likely to be more extensive than those arising from a revolution in the distribution of economic and political power."

A crank would go on to make the case, and recommend a nostrum. It is to Dr. Comfort's credit that although he does suggest some remedies for our condition, he has no all-in solution. His book is largely addressed to officials, scientists, and social workers, who will go on serving large-scale agencies with a fuller knowledge every day of how little can be done. In so far as he believes that human beings and families must change their lives, bring up their children in a different way before radical change in society is possible, and that

" order radiates from the centre ", he seems to me, though he rejects the Christian idea of sin, a natural ally of the Christians in their present predicaments, and I hope that Christian social workers faced with their own difficulties inside the state machine, will not fail to study his.

GEORGE EVERY, S.S.M.

The Presence of the Kingdom. By Jacques Ellul (translated by Olive Wyon). S.C.M. Press, 9s. 6d.

It was very well worth while to have this book translated into English. M. Jacques Ellul, Professor of Law at Bordeaux, has written " a call to arms, showing what enemy we have to confront, what warfare we have to wage, what weapons we have to use," and it is addressed primarily to the Christian intellectuals. This author, who is well known in the ecumenical movement, is not afraid to risk contempt as " anti-technical " or " reactionary ". The Christian, he says, " finds that he is not confronted by the material forces of the world but by its spiritual reality " ; but the present principalities, powers and world-rulers of darkness are very much identified with the forces of the civilization that now threatens to overflow the globe. The primacy of production, the growing power of the state, the autonomous development of technics, etc., are pressures making for the depersonalization of man, the enslavement of his soul as well as his body. They are promoted, and their progress is radically shaped, by powers of evil in man ; and the attitude of those who say there is no evil in technique *as such*, or uncritically accept all such tendencies " as inevitable ", or co-operate with them in a weak hope of making things a little more humanly acceptable—this is not enough. It can easily lead to action entirely directed to the material world, merely helping men to descend more comfortably into spiritual non-entity, evading the inherent opposition between Christian obedience and the world's own will, which is " always a will to death, a will to suicide ".

Not that anyone can contract out of this situation. The author briefly examines and dismisses another evasion of the challenge—that which consists in trying to live the life of the spirit and of the world in two separate compartments of the mind : and he finds another kind

of temptation in the idea that the present situation is "apocalyptic", and that these are "the last days"—which may be only an optical illusion, for it has often seemed so to others at other times; in two hundred years, when the details with which we are obsessed will have disappeared, our day will seem historic like others, and not "apocalyptic" at all. Yet in another sense, the Christian cannot have any vision of the world he lives in that is not apocalyptic; for he is meant to live as though every moment were the last, confronted by judgment and mercy. His situation in the world-system, which he cannot get out of, is that of a revolutionary—not by his choice but by the necessity of his calling.

Professor Ellul develops this difficult theme with very keen insight and a faithful severity. It *is* the distinctive and constitutive elements, the essential structure, of our civilization which is against God, and must be opposed. It has become incapable of revolution: the whole drama of Communism and Fascism has demonstrated, and so do the efforts of United Nations organizations, the incapacity of this civilization to reform itself, however violent its political struggles. The forces of merely human revolt that it generates do not overcome its profound immobility of aim, its progress to uniformity. The author locates the intellectual origin of this impotence in the idolatry of fact. Facts are accepted as authoritative (as if we ever really knew them) and competent to contradict any movement of the spirit. For the Christian intellectual, rejection of this error lies at the heart of his obedience and of his revolutionary duty.

The revolution in question works from within, from within the world structure and within the individual soul; and the effective method of it is outlined as "the creation of a style of life" both individual and collective. In times past, of which Professor Ellul cites examples, this has been the way of revolt, spiritual, aggressive though non-violent and co-operative, by which the Church has undermined and transformed the structure of the secular order in which it lived, and there is no other way. The present weakness of all reformist movements, including those of the Church, is that, however earnest their efforts, they are not opposing the conformism that encroaches with the technical order of the world with any style of life of their own.

This is an astringent, salutary tract for the times, which deserves to be widely read and deeply pondered.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

INFLATION

Dear Sirs,

Surely the writer of the article on Inflation in your January number propounds a strange moral philosophy. He points out that the present scramble for wage-increases brings hardship to the unorganized workers and is bad for the country. He then says that it is unjust to blame trade-union leaders for sponsoring demands for higher wages—for the following reasons: that "few indeed of their followers can understand the situation", and that, if the union leaders did not press for higher wages, they would lose their jobs.

Generalized as a moral principle, this view would seem to run as follows. A man cannot be blamed for doing what he knows to be wrong, if his clients wish it, and if someone else would do it if he declined. These seem strange ethics for *The Frontier*. And what a picture of democracy! A people of whom the vast majority cannot understand a very simple point; and leaders afraid to tell them, bluntly and persistently, what is the truth. You have admirably described a weakness—and something more than a weakness—which brings democracies into contempt and may bring them to ruin.

R. W. Livingstone.

Dear Sirs,

The excellent Monthly Letter on Inflation in your January issue has brought to my mind some words written a hundred years ago by F. W. Faber:—

> "If it be a special office of the Church to bear witness against the world, her witness must especially be borne against the reigning vices of the world; and therefore in these days, against effeminacy, the worship of comfort, and the extravagances of luxury. I believe, if this unhappy land is ever to be converted, of which there are many hopes and no signs, it will be by some religious order or orders who shall exhibit to a degraded and vicious people the vision of evangelical poverty in its sternest perfection."

Whatever may be thought of Faber's particular remedy, I suggest that at least much can be done by individual Christians doing without cars and refrigerators, using stairs instead of lifts, eating sandwiches in trains, and generally doing their best to boycott those luxuries which most people to-day find so necessary but which are so far removed from the spirit of the gospel. For the problem of inflation is not simply a technical problem of how the country can maintain economic balance, but a spiritual problem of how much importance to attach to worldly comfort.

J. M. Ross.

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GEORGE EVERY, S.S.M. in *Theology*

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